



Los Alamos National Laboratory receives second Presidential Award as a climate champion

December 8, 2015



LOS ALAMOS, N.M., Dec. 8, 2015—In recognition of their proactive commitment to protecting the environment of Northern New Mexico from the potential impacts of a changing climate, a consortium of Los Alamos National Laboratory's federal and contractor staff received the GreenGov Presidential Award on Nov. 30.

"We recognized the need for a different approach after a devastating wildfire and a series of impactful environmental events," said Michael Brandt, associate director for the Laboratory's Environment, Safety and Health directorate. "As a laboratory, we seek to be good stewards of the environment by implementing scientific, engineering and operational measures that mitigate the impacts of climate change and by managing our natural and cultural resources."

Recent events such as bark beetle infestations, a series of wildfires and flooding on the Pajarito Plateau prompted a multifaceted effort to reduce future environmental impacts.

The Laboratory's approach to environmental stewardship includes long-term planning, wildfire mitigations, additional environmental monitoring and implementation of new land, storm water and forest management plans. Integration efforts include the development of the Department of Energy and Laboratory's 2010 Long-Term Strategy for Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability, a multi-agency emergency response and interagency fire center, storm water controls and coordinated land management plans.

"This strategic approach began with a 50-year planning horizon," Brandt said.

"Developing and implementing it refocused our thinking and actions to reduce risks to current and future operations and protect public health and the environment."

The GreenGov Presidential Awards celebrate extraordinary achievements in the pursuit of President Obama's executive order on federal leadership in environmental, energy and economic performance. The awards honor federal teams, projects, facilities and programs that exemplify President Obama's charge to lead by example towards a clean energy economy. This the second time the Laboratory has received the award. The institution was first honored in 2000 for their sweeping "A-1000" recycling program.

"Thank you again on behalf of the Administration and the Council on Environmental Quality for your commitment to lead by example and take charge on federal sustainability," said Amy Porter, acting federal chief sustainability officer, when addressing the award recipients at the ceremony held in Washington D.C

Among the many award recipients are Michael Sweitzer from the DOE National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), Dennis Hjeresen and Leslie Hansen from the Laboratory, Josh Silverman and Eric Bradley from the headquarters Office of Sustainability Support and Cassandra Begay from the NNSA Los Alamos Field Office.

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